



The *VOTER* NEWSLETTER MARCH 2016

Mark Your Calendar

- March 3, 2016 - March 12, 2016 One stop (Early) Voting: Locations/times - <http://www.darenc.com/boe/info.asp>
- March 4, 2016 **First Friday Hot Topic Luncheon:** Roosters Restaurant, KDH, 12 noon
Speaker: Susan Smith, Beach Food Pantry
* *reservations required* – Lorelei DiBernardo, ltd32@charter.net
- March 9, 2016 **How Integrative Medicine May Compliment Your Primary Care:** Baum Center, 2 pm Speaker: Christina M Bowen, MD - Holistic approach to medicine; Open to the public.
- March 15, 2016 BOE Election: for more information – <http://www.lwvdarenc.org/>
- March 16, 2016 LWV Board Meeting: KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10 am
- Early April Educational presentation on **Offshore Drilling:** Location and time TBD
- April 1, 2016 **First Friday Hot Topic Luncheon:** La Dolce Vita Restaurant, Manteo, 12 noon
Speaker: Holly Meekins, Nursing Director, Dare County Home Health and Hospice Care * *reservations required* – Lorelei DiBernardo, ltd32@charter.net
- April 20, 2016 LWV Board Meeting: KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10 am
- April 20, 2016 **Therapeutic Yoga** and Reiki Massage Presentation and Demonstration: Kitty Hawk Meeting Rm, 1-3 pm Speaker: Dee Lees Shepard, PhD
Psychotherapist; Open to the public. *Opportunity for audience participation.*
- May 4, 2016 3rd Annual Wine & Cheese Reception: CSI, 4 pm
Speaker: Robert McClendon – *Low Impact Development (LID)*
- May 13, 2016 Annual LWV Luncheon, details TBD
- May 18, 2016 LWV Board Meeting: KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10 am (*members welcome*)

Co-President's Message

Hello Members,

We had a great start to the New Year!

On January 26, Charles Smith, husband of member Janice Smith, gave a very interesting presentation on *Wind Power: Land and Sea*. At our February First Friday lunch, Seth Rose, a “near peer” counselor from the Carolina College Advising Corp, explained his role in expanding the horizons for Dare County high school students. On February 10, representatives from an independent medical facility, Sentara & Vidant Health Care Systems presented *Medical Services on the OBX: A Changing Scene*. They explained how and why Sentara and Vidant are managing care here and why some physicians have chosen not to be affiliated.

Our Voter Services committee, headed by Mary Ellen Hawthorne and Lin Logan, held a Candidates Reception on February 21st for those running in the Primary election for the Dare County Board of Commissioners and for a representative's seat in the State legislature. They also held Candidate Forums in Nags Head (2/23) and at the Fessenden Center (2/29) for the Dare County Board of Education election. All went very well and if you missed them, you can view the events on our website where the videos have been posted <http://www.lwvdarenc.org/elections.html>

Most importantly, One Stop Voting, the primary election, takes place from March 3 to March 12 at various locations. See <http://www.darenc.com/boe/onestop.asp> for times and locations. The primary election will be held on March 15. Be sure to vote!

We have several events coming up, including the First Friday Hot Topic Lunch on March 4 at Roosters Restaurant. Our speaker will be Susan Smith, from the *Beach Food Pantry*. She will provide an overview of the operations of this local non-profit, whose mission is to provide direct nutritional assistance to Dare County residents in a temporary crisis or emergency situation. Contact Lorelei DiBernardo ltd32@charter.net for reservations.

On Friday, March 9 at 2pm, Christina Bowen, MD, will present *How Integrative Medicine May Compliment Your Primary Care*. Integrative Medicine, her new field of practice, is a healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person (body, mind, and spirit), including all aspects of lifestyle. This presentation will be held at the Baum Center.

On April 1st, at our First Friday Hot Topic Lunch, Holly Meekins, BSN, RN, Unit Director of *Dare Home Health and Hospice* services will provide an overview on the scope and purpose of her division.

We are planning an educational program on Off Shore Drilling for early April. Details will be communicated to you as they are finalized.

Also mark your calendar for April 20 at 1PM, where we will learn about *Therapeutic Yoga*. This presentation, at the Kitty Hawk Meeting Room, will introduce the purpose of this yoga form and the philosophy behind it. There will also be an opportunity to learn and do some of the poses!

As you can clearly see, we have a very busy couple of months ahead of us! Hope to see you soon!

Submitted by Mary Jane Slesinski and Lorelei DiBernardo, Co-presidents

Treasurer's Report

I am happy to report that your League has a healthy monetary balance in both the operating account (\$11,944.14) and the Citizens Education Foundation (CEF), which contains the tax deductible contributions' account maintained by the LWVNC (our fundraising contributions are deposited into the CEF subaccount for Dare, and when we have expenses that are approved by National for reimbursement, we get our money back -- i.e. Citizens Guide). Since our fundraising efforts were so successful this year, our balance is \$7,461.11 - the highest ever! Our biggest expense is for the Citizens Guide which is \$3,841.00, so the remaining balance in the CEF account will be \$3,620.11. Since CEF monies can be spent on Voter Service activities, the Board has approved making a request to LWV-NC for reimbursement funding for the videotaping of the Candidates' Meet and Greet Reception for candidates for commissioners and NC General Assembly seats and the forum for the candidates for the Board of Education. The total cost is \$750.00. Even with that deduction, there is almost enough money in the fund to pay for the Citizens Guide for 2017 - before the fundraising campaign begins in the fall. An application has been filed with the County for a grant to be applied to the CG 2017 expense for \$675.00 which enriches the pot.

If you were unable to attend either of the candidate events for the election on March 15, each will be aired four times on Charter Cable. The primary candidates' reception will air on channel 191 on 2/29 at 7:00 p.m.; 3/3 at 9:00 p.m.; 3/7 at 9:00, and 3/13 at 9:00.

The Board of Education Forum will air on channel 198 at 3/1 at 9:00; 3/5 at 9:00; 3/9 at 8:00, and 3/13 at 8:00 pm.

The GovTV Advisory Board has changed its procedures to accommodate League requests for televised events. Each taping must have a sponsor, i.e. a town, the county, the Board of Commissioners, or the Board of Education. The Advisory Board has increased the number of times that these events can be shown to four to further promote the League's mission to inform the voting population about candidates and the electoral process. YEAH for us!!!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Each year a small committee of members prepares a proposed budget to be approved by the membership at the Annual Meeting in May. I am seeking 3-4 members to work with me to produce the document for consideration. Time commitment is probably 1-2 meetings of about 1 1/2 hours duration. If interested, please contact me at 252-261-3915 or via email at Bbirindelli@aol.com by March 9. Thank you for your interest in advance.

Submitted by Nancy Birindelli, Treasurer

KUDOS

A big THANK YOU to Carol Butscher for overseeing the 2016 Citizens Guide Project and to all the businesses and folks whose contributions made it possible (see the list of donors on the last page)

Citizens Guide 2016

The Citizens Guide 2016 has been completed and distributed. This year we printed 6500 copies. Our successful fund raising campaign in the fall provided us with the necessary funds for printing. Be sure to check out the back cover and the “in kind” donors. Please mention to them that you saw that they donated!

It was a monumental task and it could not have been completed without the help of many of our members. Pat Hayward and Carole Burchette did the follow-up calls to the entries that did not return their forms. Lorelei DiBernardo and Mary Jane Slesinski did the difficult task of proofreading. I'm sure they both will need their eyes examined – it is very tedious work. Nancy Birindelli checked and rechecked our donor list. The following members delivered the guides and/or did the presentations to the towns: Lorelei DiBernardo, Tony DiBernardo, Judy Lotas, Ursula Bateman, Nancy D'Andrade, Mary Jane Slesinski, Geri Sullivan, Marion Midgett, & Mary Remer.

A special thank you to Mary Jane for having the guides delivered to her house for bundling. The weather didn't cooperate with our “bundling party” on Feb 12th, so she and husband, Ron, did the job themselves.

Submitted by Carol Butscher, Citizens Guide Chair

Integrative Medicine: March 9, 2016

Dr. Christina Bowen, MD, will present a program entitled, “How Integrative Medicine May Compliment Your Primary Care,” on Wednesday, March 9, at 2PM at the Baum Center. This program is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Dare County and is open to the public.

Dr. Bowen graduated from the East Carolina University School of Medicine in 2003 and recently graduated from the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona College Of Medicine. The Center, which was founded in 1994 by Dr. Andrew Weil, has focused its efforts in three domains: education, clinical care and research.

When she returns to practice after maternity leave, Dr. Bowen will consult on the integrative approach to primary care including allopathic and alternative medicine. She is very enthusiastic about this approach to prevention and treatment. Her presentation will include an interactive approach in which members of the audience may assess their own health issues and approaches to wellness. There will be ample opportunity to ask questions.

Submitted by Mary Jane Slesinski, Co-President

Observer Corp Report

We are pleased to announce the kick off on January 1st of the Observer Corp at the Dare County Board of Commissioners (BOC) meetings. Colleen Oaksmith and Lorelei DiBernardo comprise the core group who attend the BOC meetings, observe and take notes, and submit summary reports. Our goal is to increase our own knowledge and awareness of local issues and decision making at the County level. Our hope is to pass this knowledge and awareness along to our membership.

The BOC meets two times per month typically: On the 1st Monday of the month at 9 am and on the 3rd Monday of month at 5 pm. The meetings are held in the Dare County Administration Meeting Room and there are 7 Commissioners. One real benefit to us is that the Agendas, Meeting Minutes, as well as video of each meeting are posted in a timely fashion on the County website: <http://www.darenc.com/gov/govboc.php> This is an invaluable resource to determine what's to be discussed, what was decided, and if you want to watch it for yourself, you can!!!

Here are highlights from our first 2 months of 'observing.'

In January, a proposal was presented to the Commissioners by NC State University Office of Outreach and Engagement for a **Dare County Economic Development Plan**. The plan, which will be managed by NCSU, is designed to develop an economic diversification strategy for Dare County. Commissioner approval was unanimously granted for this project, which will cost the county \$58,640 (in 4 installments) during 2016. A Public Hearing on this proposal was held on January 19th and proceeded on schedule. We should be hearing more details about and strategies from this Economic Development Plan as the year unfolds.

Most of the February 15th meeting was devoted to components of the **Buxton Beach Nourishment project**. Contractor Tim Kana, of Coastal Science & Engineering Company, made a presentation depicting the size and scope of the work, milestones reached and future steps. The area to be nourished is 2.9 miles long, just north of Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. The "borrow" area consists of roughly 286 acres that are 1.7 miles off the coast south of the targeted beach. 2.6 million cubic yards of sand will be pumped onto the beach and to the underwater slope of the beach. This beach nourishment project has been developed with a goal of protecting Highway 12 from ocean over wash and erosion. From a solely project management perspective, Mr. Kana stated, the work should commence in May - June 2016, however the bids and equipment availability have not yet been determined. Permitting is almost completed and bids will be due on or before April 21 under the current schedule. Kana stated that a well-engineered, relatively small project, like this one, may have a good chance of being executed between larger projects. We will have to wait and see if that happens.

A discussion of the creation of a Tax Service District, to help support this project followed. It was approved by the Commissioners in a 4 to 2 split vote to include 34 ocean front properties in the project area. A Public Hearing will be scheduled for this proposed Tax Service District.

Submitted by Lorelei DiBernardo

Education Report - Dare County

The Dare County Board of Education met on January 5 for a special session and on January 12 and February 9, 2016 for regular sessions. They met at Nags Head Elementary, Manteo Elementary, and Cape Hatteras Elementary respectively.

At the special meeting on January 5, 2016 the Board chose former member Benjamin Cahoon to fill the vacant at-large seat for District 5 for six months. He was sworn in on January 12.

At both regular meetings the Board handled routine matters such as: revised policies concerning a code of ethics and development opportunities for Board members, both handed down from the General Assembly; a revised policy adding a requirement for education regarding sex trafficking prevention and awareness to the comprehensive health education program, also from the General Assembly; and a revised concussion and head injury policy from the State Board of Education.

The Board approved the Dare Schools 2016-17 to 2020-21 Capital Improvement Plan including maintenance items, transportation needs, and technology needs. The plan will be submitted to the County Commission for funding consideration.

On January 12, the facilities supervisor presented a comprehensive report concerning the status of Manteo Middle School traffic and pedestrian issues. Short term (Apr. 2016) and long term (Aug. 2016) redesign plans will be effected to provide more safety during the after-school mishmash of parent cars, buses, and walkers which clog the MMS/ Highway 64 intersection.

Also, at the Manteo Elementary meeting, the audience was treated to a short violin performance by twenty-five 4th and 5th graders. There is a strings program in each Dare School; and the students are part of the Dare County Youth Orchestra.

BOE Election Reminder

One and Done Election on March 15, 2016

The districts and candidates are as follows:

District 1—Bea Basnight (incumbent)

District 2—Ben Sproul (incumbent)

District 4—Carlos A. Babilonia, Buxton and Mary Ellon Ballance, Hatteras

District 5—Brandy Foreman, Roanoke Island and
David Twiddy, Roanoke Island

See League Election Info handout or Citizens Guide for district designations/
boundaries.

Submitted by Marion W. Midgett, Education Chair

Other NC Education Items in the News

On January 30, 2016 *Public Schools First* and other leading NC education and advocacy groups conducted a workshop at Alamance Community College in Graham, NC to inform and rally participants about a statewide effort to involve state and local organizations in a campaign to publicize issues that have arisen from five-plus years of legislative attacks on public education. Other participating groups in the coalition include *NC PTA*, *NCAE*, *NC LWV*, and *NC NAACP*. The effort will be directed to North Carolinians who believe that quality public schools are the key to our state's future.

Attending from Dare County were Elisabeth Pipp Silverthorne, Executive Director of the *Dare Education Foundation*, a member of *Public Schools First*; and Judy Justice and Marion W. Midgett, members of *Dare County LWV* and *NCAE*.

The goals at the heart of the campaign are to cause the General Assembly:

- * To increase the low per pupil monetary expenditures (including textbook funds, which have been slashed) and fully fund public schools
- * To end vouchers for attendance at private and parochial schools which take funds from public schools
- * To bring accountability to Charter Schools
- * To discontinue the A—F Grading of public schools and replace it with more detailed report cards that include useful indicators, including data on college and workforce readiness and school effectiveness in closing achievement gaps
- * To oppose legislation that would establish an Achievement District (for a lower performing district) that removes local control, local accountability, or local oversight
- * To encourage local boards of education to recognize and resolve that public school teachers have free speech rights protected by the First Amendment, as long as the speech does not adversely impact the functioning their public schools

Submitted by Marion W. Midgett, Education Chair

CONNECT NC Bond - Funding Referendum

We haven't been hearing much about it, but there will be an important referendum on the March 15th Ballot for all voters. This referendum is referred to as the "Connect NC Bond" and it represents a total of \$2 billion in infrastructure investment. If approved, it will support numerous capital projects throughout the state of NC.

Highlights include direct investments in 76 counties. Projects funded will include investments in NC's universities and community colleges (64%), NC agriculture (9%), state parks and zoo (5%), public safety and National Guard (4%) and water and sewer infrastructure projects (16%). Due to NC's current revenue growth and debt rating, no tax increases are proposed to fund this bond. To find out more <http://connect.nc.gov/>

Submitted by Lorelei DiBernardo, Co-President

CITIZEN'S GUIDE DONORS

The League of Women Voters Dare County's Citizen's Guide is printed and distributed throughout Dare County as a public service. We would be unable to provide this vital tool without the generosity of our local contributors. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their donations.

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